

Fun n' FITchburg Mass in Motion Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2010

3:00-4:40 PM

City Hall Veterans Room 718 Main Street

The meeting came to order approximately 3:00PM,

Introductions from members names and what their positions are – guests included two professionals from MassRides as part of Safe Routes to School initiative.

Nancy Fillers showed photos taken by Ed Collier as part of additional funding from RWJF to take pictures of healthy eating and active living activities in each community.

Donna Wysokenski and Trevor Bonilla gave an online tutorial of the Fun 'n FITchburg website as part of the City of Fitchburg's website found on the residents page @ <http://www.ci.fitchburg.ma.us/residents/fun-n-fitchburg/default.cfm>

A presentation-of the parks assessments was presented.

The park assessments were reviewed by Ayn Yeagle.

The assessment of the Elm St- Lowe St. Playground. park was presented by Deb Mayo. Many issues were pointed out including the accessibility issue, unsafe crosswalk adjoining the two sides of the park, broken equipment, graffiti on play equipment, swings are too high, and sod needs to be laid.

The reasons to visit the park:

- *Lots of different activities to choose from for different age groups*
- *Fairly good visibility and in public space near church and elder housing*
- *Good for little kids and basketball players*

Reasons not to visit park

- *Safety - A lot of graffiti on the playground equipment and broken equipment*
- *(see-saw broken and swings too high)*
- *Playground is in an odd place near elder housing and difficult to access due to lack of crosswalks*
- *Not a lot of aesthetically pleasing features (no flowers, equipment is worn etc.)*

Recommendations to upgrade the park and create a safer space include:

- *Lower swings, add toddler size swings, and put fill under swings*
- *Repaint benches and equipment and fix broken equipment (see-saw and horseshoes)*
- *Add flowers throughout and shade over some of the benches*

- *Move playground across the street to where existing playground area is located, with natural divider between basketball court area and/or near BF Brown ensuring not to interfere with field area for free play*
- *Add signage marking the park and what is available*
- *Add cross walks and traffic calming measures*
- *Add path/track where youth can ride bikes, skateboards – smooth existing sidewalk*
- *Ask youth in area if there is anything else they would like at the park*

The assessment of Park Hill park was presented by Steve Curry

The accessibility of the park is a major concern, park lacks crosswalks, walk signals and public transportation.

There are safety issues with the water problems- sink holes and lack of bridges over the stream going thru the park.

The reasons to visit the park

- *There are many walking/biking trails as well as a splash park, BMX/Skateboarding, Basketball and baseball fields.*
- *It is a safe place to be.*

The reasons you wouldn't visit the park

- *Lack of transportation*
- *No connecting sidewalks to surrounding neighborhood*
- *Facility is not well advertised.*

Recommendations to consider include:

- *Open Drainage is cause for concern*
- *Trail water drainage could be restored*
- *There are two major sink holes that need to be addressed for safety - recommend building a small bridge across the sink hole.*
- *Additional benches around courts would be a nice addition for parents to watch their children play.*
- *New sign for the rules of the park to placed in a more prominent area.*
- *Provide an information kiosk with a park map so visitors can see all of the recreational opportunities*
- *Have marked cross-walks on the neighboring streets.*

The assessment of Coggs Hall Park was presented by Katie Hunting

Playground is clean and well-maintained but updates needed.

Playground has plenty of signage and picnic table and benches available.

No public transportation available at this time.

These plans are already under consideration:

- *Fix gazebo electricity*

- *Fix dam within 3 years*
- *Frisbee golf course needs parking and gate at South St. entrance.*

The reasons to visit the park:

- *Trails are tranquil and good for exercising and running*
- *Scenery*
- *There's something for people of all ages*

Reasons not to visit the park are:

- *Can get lost on trails – need a map*
- *Trails need to be marked with signage*

Recommendations for consideration include:

- *Create an information kiosk with maps in an easily accessible, high-traffic area.*
- *Add trail signage and signage for Frisbee golf course.*
- *Add more lighting.*
- *Add call boxes along trails.*
- *Update play equipment.*
- *Fix fence in playground area.*
- *Improve access to public transportation.*
- *Create a trail in woods that is handicapped accessible.*
- *Find ways to improve walking safety to park especially looking at sidewalks, crosswalks and busy intersections.*

Officer McNamara spoke about cameras in the park to deter vandalism and help ease safety fears.

The RAD program was also mentioned. He suggested that residents take advantage of the opportunity to attend.

The safe routes to school program was brought up and it was suggested that it become a Sub group of the MIM Action plan.

It was also mentioned that there are several departments around the city working on the same projects—Officer McNamara suggests that a lead person or coordinator be chosen in order to keep track of and organize these plans. The steering committee will meet to discuss.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2011.